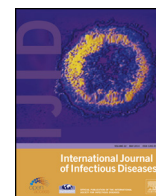


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Letter to the Editor

Response to letter to the editor re 'HIV Trends: Defining "The Middle East"*To the Editor,*

We read the Letter to the Editor entitled *HIV trends: defining 'The Middle East'* by Berger, submitted to the *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*, which includes comments on the article entitled *HIV/AIDS: trends in the Middle East and North Africa region* by Gökengin et al.¹

There are many different definitions of the Middle East, as well as several definitions of Central and Eastern Europe. While countries like Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan are included in the Middle East region in many geographical maps,² they are excluded in others because they are considered European or Asian countries, respectively.³ For the purpose of our article, reviewing critical HIV/AIDS issues in the MENA region,¹ it was decided to use the definitions of two global health authorities – UNAIDS and the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office of the World Health Organization (WHO/EMRO). Our only main interest was to bring attention to this long-neglected region and to focus on the

response regarding HIV/AIDS. We thank Dr Berger for reading our review article.

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